

Witcher

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“Indeed, there is nothing more repulsive than these monsters that defy nature and are known by the name of witcher, as they are the offspring of foul sorcery and witchcraft. They are unscrupulous scoundrels without conscience and virtue, veritable creatures from hell capable only of taking lives...”

—Monstrum, or a Portrayal of Witchers, Anonymous

Witchers (*Homo Venator: Hunter Man*), also known as **wiccans**, **hexers**, **[vedžmins](#)**, **vedžminas**, **vedymins**, **witchmens**, **she-witchers**, and **witcheresses** in their place of origin, the Northern Kingdoms, and the neighboring Nilfgaardian Empire, are a scientifically and magically engineered post-human species derived from [Homo Sapiens](#). Originally designed by the mages of the organization known as the Circle during the 10th century, witchers were created both to as a transitional form to improve the human species as well to combat the myriad monsters inhabiting the Nordling lands and to aid human colonization efforts, as humans were poorly equipped to handle these threats. They were also conceived as tools against non-humans, though this secondary function was mostly abandoned.

Witcher



Geralt of Rivia, one of the most famous witchers

Due to their nomadic nature and the demand for their services, witchers eventually extended their presence worldwide. Initially considered a subspecies of Homo sapiens, their significant genetic differences from their ancestors, along with the presence of mutated non-humans and half-humans in their ranks, eventually led scholars to recognize them as a new human species. These hybrid members include examples like the [Bear Witcher](#) Junod of Belhaven, rumored to be half-dwarf and half-giant.

Throughout their history, excluding their half-human members such as the Homo Edari Venator (half-elf witchers) and Homo Rotundus Venator (half-dwarf witchers), at least three subspecies of Homo Venator have been confirmed to exist: Homo Venator Fortis ([School of the Rhino](#) Witchers), Homo Venator Oceanus ([School of the Crane](#) Witchers), and Homo Venator Noctis ([School of the Bat](#) Witchers).

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Taxonomy

Classification	Post-human
Species	Homo Venator
Related Species	Various subspecies depending on the subject that was mutated and the witcher schools from which they came

Physiology

Height	Varied in height, but mostly similar to humans or elves
Weight	Similar to humans
Eyes	Cat-like eyes

Ecology

Lifespan	300-400 years or more
Intelligence	Human-like intelligence
Nature	Varied, depending on the subject and the school of origin
Range	Old Continent Western Continent
Habitat	Similar to that of humans and other sentient races
Diet	Omnivorous
Prey	Monsters
Predators	Humans and non-humans (in groups) Mages Monsters

2.4. The Bronze Age of Witchers
(1146 - 1358 A.R)

2.5. The Platinum Age of Witchers
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Biology and Behaviour

The Homo Venator shares many characteristics with their ancestor, Homo Sapiens, including habitats, psychology, cultures, anatomy, and part of their biology. However, these common traits can differ, especially when the Homo Venator is half-human, inheriting traits from their non-human parent as well.

Designed as tools against monstrous threats, witchers of both sexes possess a series of enhancements compared to their ancestors:

- **Cat-like Eyes:** Granting very acute night vision, witchers can constrict their pupils to see in blinding light or open them to see in near pitch darkness. This night vision can be further enhanced with the cat potion, but it is generally good enough by itself. Like other predators with vertical pupils, such as felines and vipers, they can track movement and detect even the slightest changes in their surroundings.
- **Enhanced Sensory System:** Allowing them to identify the species of an animal from the scent of its blood and detect nearby beings even when out of sight. This heightened sense of smell and hearing provides witchers with a significant advantage when tracking prey, as they can pick up on subtle cues that would be invisible to ordinary humans.
- **Tremendous Disease Resistance:** Functioning in most cases as complete immunity and a boosted immune system, allowing them to consume large quantities of their witcher elixirs. These potions improve their system against foes but could prove easily deadly if consumed even in small amounts by a normal human. For a witcher, they act akin to a mild poison, which can be countered with potions such as Swallow. This resistance also grants witchers part of their longevity, as they do not suffer from common illnesses.
- **Exceptional Physical Abilities:** Including increased strength, speed, reflexes, and endurance far beyond any normal or well-trained human. This

allows them to swiftly end fights with minimal effort and perform physical feats non-witchers couldn't hope to match. A witcher's physical abilities are sufficient to defeat most monsters single-handedly when combined with extensive training and proper weaponry, whereas regular men could only hope to accomplish this in large groups. Witchers have also been known to shrug off hits that would render normal men unconscious and survive the strikes of powerful monsters, such as giants or other beings possessing herculean strength, that would otherwise kill humans with a single blow. Their agility and stamina enable them to undertake long, arduous hunts without tiring.

- **Accelerated Healing:** Granting quick recovery from injuries, this ability is crucial for witchers who often find themselves in dangerous situations. Their bodies can rapidly mend broken bones, close deep wounds, and recover from severe trauma, allowing them to continue fighting where others would fall. For example, a witcher can recover from a severe beating over the course of a season or from malnutrition in only about 20 days, something that would take much longer for a normal human.
- **Incredibly Long Lifespan and Prolonged Youth:** Witchers age much slower than ordinary humans, maintaining their vitality and physical prowess for centuries. This extended lifespan gives them vast experience and knowledge, making them even more formidable hunters over time.
- **Magical Potential:** Witchers have more magical potential than the average human, giving them the ability to perform simple yet incredibly versatile combat magic in the form of signs. They also develop a sixth sense that allows them to "feel" things around them, be it items of importance or people's immediate intentions, akin to the ability possessed by some psionics but less powerful and more vague. This explains their uncanny ability to track and hunt people and monsters. However, the amount of magic they possess is not as close to that of sorcerers and sorceresses, with the exception of those born as Sources. However, this is rare, since most of the Sources ended up becoming mages. Witchers typically use signs such as Aard (a telekinetic blast), Igni (a burst of flame), Yrden (a magical trap), **Quen** (a protective shield), and Axii (a form of mental influence), among others. These signs, while not as powerful as the spells cast by trained mages, are highly effective in combat and can be used in rapid succession.

Sexual Dimorphism

Main article: [Female Witchers](#)

Like their ancestor, sexual dimorphism exists between male and female witchers, sharing most of the sexual dimorphism traits with their predecessor, while some are unique to them. The most notable example is that while male witchers excel in strength, female witchers excel in agility.

Their physical abilities, in comparison to Homo sapiens, are twice as strong as common humans and ten times faster.

For instance, the average human male can bench press around 135 pounds (61 kg) for a few repetitions. A witcher could potentially bench press 270 pounds (122 kg). The average human male might deadlift around 200 pounds (91 kg). A witcher could deadlift 400 pounds (182 kg).

Their reaction time is 25 milliseconds (one-tenth of 250 ms), and they can achieve speeds of 150 mph (240 km/h) for short bursts. Witchers can also jump vertically 40 inches (100 cm). Additionally, witchers can run longer distances at higher speeds without tiring. If an average human can run a marathon (26.2 miles or 42.2 km) in 4-5 hours, a witcher might complete it in under 30 minutes given their speed and stamina.

Their strength comes from the double testosterone present in their bodies, which causes their overdeveloped libido, ranging from 600-2,000 ng/dL. This results in sexual activity 2-4 times per week or more. Due to this increase in testosterone, witchers have 45-60% muscle mass compared to the average human.

T Female witchers exhibit significantly increased muscular endurance
h compared to their male counterparts. They show less increase in heart
e rate and blood pressure under similar fatigue levels and consistently
w outlast their targets, with an increase of about 10-15 bpm, indicating a
it more efficient cardiovascular response. Given their superior endurance,
c they can complete a marathon in about 20 minutes, showcasing their
h ability to sustain physical effort much longer.
e

r They have a slightly different reaction time in comparison to males,
of around 30 milliseconds. This small difference is often compensated by the
t females' superior agility and flexibility.
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e They have similar strength to their male counterparts, but with females,
S roughly twice as strong as an average human female, capable of bench
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pressing 130 pounds and deadlifting 300 pounds. As such, though they typically exhibit a more lithe and agile build, this is still considerably more muscular than an average human female.

Female witchers have a libido comparable to the average human male due to the elimination of pregnancy risk, venereal disease, and social or financial consequences. This results in sexual activity from 1-2 times per week or more. Some also experience increased libido from elevated testosterone levels.

Female witchers also have an acute sense of smell and taste, compared to their male counterparts. This manifests in the field as better, more accurate tracking and the ability to determine the chemical composition of certain bodily fluids, primarily blood, by taste. This is primarily due to their enhanced olfactory and gustatory systems, which have been further developed during their mutation process. The increased number of olfactory receptors in female witchers allows them to detect a wider range of scents and differentiate between them with greater precision. This makes them exceptional trackers, capable of following a scent trail that would be imperceptible to others. Their ability to taste and analyze blood and other bodily fluids enables them to gain insights into the health, species, and even emotional state of their targets, providing crucial information during hunts and investigations. Males for their part have advantages in other aspects of their biology such as, the already mentioned greater strength, as well more resistance to physical damage due to slightly stronger bones.

After the Second Conjunction, female witchers usually suffered from chronic pain as a secondary effect of their mutations. Some theorize that this was also present in those mutated with the Cat formula before the Second Conjunction, which, coupled with the environment of the Cat School and the increased emotions derived from the corrupted original Cat formula, could have caused erratic behavior or mental issues in some of them. This pain was managed by self-medicating using a specialized potion called faopian. This has promoted an overall increase in tolerance to toxins and poisons, akin to the tolerance found in male Manticore witchers. Due to their near-daily intake, most female witchers are purported to have boosted this natural tolerance to total immunity,

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allowing them to drink and make use of even more potent potions as well as resist the deadliest known poisons.

While males have advantages in other biological fields, such as a more resistant stomach to a heavy diet and the ability to metabolize large quantities of food quickly, this allowed them to consume the more potent potions that female witchers can take on an empty stomach when they have food in their system. However, this came with a slightly reduced effect due to the presence of food in their bodies. Similar to the small difference in female witchers' reaction time, this is compensated by male witchers with more strength. For example, although male and female witchers consume the same amount of the blizzard potion, male witchers would require food in their bodies to resist the toxicity of the potion, so they wouldn't be able to maximize the effects of the potion properly, while females, free of that constraint, would be able to maximize the effects, meaning that under that potion, plus their endurance, females would be faster than males.

One of the key elements of their sexual dimorphism is height. While male witchers usually have a similar height, around 180 - 185 cm, with some exceptions, height varies wildly among female witchers. This was originally due to the experimental formula used by the School of the Cat to create them, and later on, after 1358, due to their later mutation process compared to the males.

Regarding their longevity, it remains uncertain, though it is speculated to be comparable to that of the Aen Seidhe elves, averaging 300-400 years or that of the [Aen Elle](#), as some individuals like [Adalwulf of Aedirn](#) have been reported to surpass that range of age. For instance, Vesemir, the last grandmaster of the [School of the Wolf](#), was born around 992 and perished in 1272 at approximately 280-290 years old, while still healthy, suggesting potential for a longer life if not for his demise in battle. For their part, female witchers are theorized, unlike female humans, to live less than males, but this is uncertain, as one of the founders of the School of the Crane, [Jolanta Dinmarb](#), died at the age of 253 in 1510 from what apparently were natural causes.

Reproduction

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Witchers are sterile, an artificial alteration done by the mages who created them. This sterility was implemented to counteract a side effect of their mutations: an overdeveloped libido. The sterility was intended to avoid hybrids and overpopulation, as well as to protect Homo sapiens from being replaced in the same way that Homo sapiens replaced Neanderthals until the new form for the human species was already developed. The only way for witchers to pass on their traits is through the [Trial of the Grasses](#), a grueling and often deadly process that transforms a normal human into a witcher. For a long time, only boys were subjected to the trial due to their increased survivability. This changed, however, during the period when the Cat School was in Stygga, where their mages, with the ideal of creating a better order from that which the different schools came, created the formula to mutate women. However, few women were subjected to the trial over the years due to a still-present lower survival rate, with only one in ten girls surviving the transformation in comparison to three in ten boys, making them even rarer than their male counterparts. It wasn't until 1358, with the Second Conjunction of the Spheres, and the studies of the [Zerrikanian](#) mage [Nasira Faisan](#), who created a new version of the formula that increased survivability, that female witchers became more common.

It is possible that extra experimental mutations could give a witcher their fertility back (at least regarding males), but the consequences of these extra mutations and experiments to restore fertility using a normal potion (not to be confused with the witcher elixirs) for people who lost their fertility due to magic or alchemy that happened in 1271 have been inconclusive. The only known effect, as reported by one of the subjects, was some hair growing on the tongue. Regarding female witchers, it is probably impossible for them to regain their fertility.

The sterility of witchers is a complex issue rooted in their biology and the magical processes involved in their creation. Despite being sterile, witchers maintain normal sexual functions and, as already mentioned, possess heightened libidos due to their elevated testosterone levels. The sterility was achieved through a combination of magical and alchemical

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means, which not only prevent the production of viable gametes but also ensure that their bodies do not suffer from the negative health effects commonly associated with sterility in other species.

Intersex/ Hermaphrodite Individuals

Intersex and hermaphrodite individuals, although rare due to their low birth rate among Homo Venator's ancestor and the risks posed by the Trial of Grasses, have been present in the ranks of the witchers. Often, these individuals were repudiated by their parents and ended up in the hands of the various schools.

It is known from different reports that their survival rate in the trial was lower, around 15%, due to potential complications as the standard trial was more designed for boys and not their unique bodies.

The main difference with their female and male counterparts is that they did not gain twice the strength of the common human, but maintained their previous strength. However, like female witchers, they show more muscular endurance.

Additionally, intersex and hermaphrodite witchers possess a unique set of abilities and characteristics that differentiate them from their male and female counterparts. Despite their lower survival rate during the Trial of the Grasses, those who do survive often become some of the most agile and perceptive hunters among witchers. Their bodies, while not as physically strong as their male counterparts, exhibit a remarkable balance of speed, agility, and endurance. This unique set of abilities that they gain after being mutated are the following:

- **Enhanced Agility and Flexibility:** Intersex witchers possess a physical agility that surpasses both male and female witchers. This agility is not just limited to their speed but also includes flexibility and dexterity, allowing them to perform acrobatic maneuvers with ease and precision. This makes them particularly effective in close-quarter combat where maneuverability is crucial.
- **Superior Reflexes:** With a reaction time of 22 milliseconds, intersex witchers have the fastest reflexes among all witchers. This heightened

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responsiveness allows them to anticipate and counter attacks with unparalleled efficiency, making them deadly adversaries in battle.

- **Heightened Sensory Perception:** Like other witchers, intersex individuals possess enhanced senses, but their ability to process sensory information quickly and accurately is even more pronounced. This acute perception extends to their sense of balance and spatial awareness, aiding them in navigating complex environments and avoiding potential threats.
- **Unique Healing Properties:** While intersex witchers share the accelerated healing abilities of their counterparts, they exhibit a slightly different healing pattern. Their wounds close faster, and they are less likely to experience complications from injuries, possibly due to their balanced hormone levels and unique physiological traits.

History

Creation (Early 10th century - 950s A.R)

Main article: [Order of Witchers](#), [Lylianna](#)

Witchers were created in the [western coast](#) of the [Old Continent](#), in the Northern Kingdoms, by the society of mages known as the Circle and affiliated monarchs to create a transitional form for the improvement of the human species, while also establishing a powerful military asset in the form of magic-using superhuman warriors who would help them both enhance the species and eliminate enemies they had otherwise been unable to subjugate, enclose in reservations, or exterminate, monsters.

It must be noted that this effort was heavily influenced by the sorceress [Lylianna](#), later referred to as the *Mother of Witchers* due to her relationship with Alzur. the also later known as the *Father of Witchers*, both members of the previously mentioned Circle. Possessing the prestige of having been a student of the mage Raffard “the White”, Lylianna conducted a campaign as she moved between the different kingdoms as an advisor, advocating for the extermination of monsters due to her idealism—especially when it came to ending the suffering of common people and safeguarding the progress of humanity in the North.

Members of the organization attempted many different ways to carry out this task while simultaneously pursuing their broader agenda of improving the human species, but the results were either disappointing or led nowhere.

It would not be until the late 950s that progress would finally be made. The later-legendary mage Alzur, accidentally created a mutagenic virus, an anatoxin that advanced the project. After experiments had been carried out across at least three different centers—Kaer Seren along with Kaer Morhen, and Beann Grudd—the virus was refined into the decoctions necessary to create witchers, earning Alzur the mentioned before title of *Father of Witchers*.

However, this would not occur before Alzur suffered a setback: the theft of these decoctions by his apprentice Idarran of Ulivo, who was as well a member of the organization of which Alzur and Lylianna were a part of, who wished to accelerate the process as quickly as possible. Idarran departed for the citadel of Morgraig (later Mirabel) in order to carry out the experiment there, hoping to eliminate the monster problem sooner to benefit all mankind, not only the rich and the powerful. His attempt failed, giving rise to what could be described as a proto-witcher.

Later on, the Circle would accuse Idarran of planning world domination, among other things. This would ultimately lead to his complete fall into villainy, as Idarran began using his knowledge to create monstrous beings with which to hunt the Circle itself, having been turned into a pariah by the very organization he believed he had served in good faith.

Additionally, at some point after Idarran's actions—drawing on his studies—Alzur would suffer a personal tragedy: the death of his partner Lylianna Mirabel, who had assisted him throughout the entire process. Together they tested the decoctions on a man who transformed into a monstrous creature and killed Lylianna within the fortress of Morgraig, which Alzur would later rename Mirabel in her honor.

Following Lylianna's death, Alzur experimented with the mutagenic virus on various women—more specifically [witches](#), due to their magical potential. These women were later exterminated by the Circle to avoid potential complications.

The result was the second version of proto-witchers: the children born from these women. These children were presented as proof that the project was progressing, which in turn led to funding from the monarchs and the founding of the [Order of the Noble Lilies](#), later popularly known as the *Order of Witchers*. This also provided the first reason for the name “*witchers*”, as they were literally the sons of witches.

The Golden Age of Witchers (970s - 1000s A.R)

Main articles: [Order of Witchers](#), [Witcher schools](#)

With funding secured and royal approval obtained, the project was moved to the experimental center at Rissberg Castle, where the first true witchers, from 38 boys and girls, were created with the process of administering the decoctions later called the [Trial of the Grasses](#). However, the survivors, due to their limited magical potential, they were deemed failures.

This led to the second origin of the name “*witcher*.” Coupled with the recruits’ lineage as the progeny of witches, the mages derisively dismissed them using the coined term “*witchers*”—charlatans capable of nothing more than mere witchery.

Over time, this derogatory term evolved into the popular designation of the Order and, eventually, the name of the profession itself.

After being expelled from Rissberg, Alzur and the Circle relocated to Mirabel, where they continued pursuing both goals—despite the project being branded a failure. In doing so, they effectively became renegade mages.

At some point during this period, a series of converging factors—chief among them Alzur’s eventual abandonment of the project and his death, along with a escalating debate among mages regarding the ethics of the mutation process—led to the gradual collapse of two of the original witcher centers, Kaer Morhen and Beann Grudd.

In the case of the first, this decision stemmed directly from the troubling incidents at Beann Grudd. It is important to stay, that the fortress was in construction back then, which cause, that, after the closure, to be left unfinished by the departing mages and personnel. Following its abandonment, Kaer Morhen fell into elven hands and was name it in the way it would be later known. The elves occupied the stronghold and eventually completed its construction, though not for the same purpose as its original founders, as it was transformed into an elven military outpost. It would remain under elven control until sometime around the 1060s, when it was vacated once more, following the death of its elven occupants during Aelirenn’s failed rebellion.

This internal conflict was largely fueled by alarming outcomes such as those at Beann Grudd, where witchers exhibited extreme instability, a disturbing inclination toward cruelty, and even enjoyment in killing. Furthermore, several

unintended mutations, particularly at Mirabel, produced even worse results than those seen in Beann Grudd. Although these problems were swiftly eliminated at Mirabel, the damage to the project's credibility —already damage to what happened at Rissberg— was done.

As a consequence, both Beann Grudd and Kaer Morhen were ultimately shut down, leaving only Mirabel, as the last remaining operational centers of the Order. Later on, it would be Mirabel (or Morgraig as many witchers later called it) that would serve as the genesis that would later gave rise to the first witcher schools.

The 970s would paradoxically represent both the golden age of the Order, albeit briefly, and the beginning of its end.

This was due in part to the abandonment of the project by most of the mages, as the mutation process increasingly sparked ethical debate among them, together with the closure of Beann Grudd and Kaer Morhen for the same reasons, as previously mentioned.

This left Mirabel as the only remaining seat of the Order, and the witchers largely to their own devices under the command of their first grandmaster, witcher Rhys.

Rhys oversaw the expansion of witchers across almost the entire western coast, carrying out their duties against monsters, which is why this period is considered the Order's golden age.

However, the departure of the mages also marked the beginning of the Order's decline, as Rhys's leadership proved weak. It was inevitable that, once members of the other fortresses were absorbed into Mirabel after the closure of their respective centers, debates similar to those the mages had held regarding the ethics of the mutation process would begin among the witchers themselves concerning their profession and code.

These debates, along with other lesser factors mentioned earlier and later, eventually led to violent incidents, which in turn resulted in the dissolution of the Order and the creation of the witcher schools.

The Silver Age of Witchers (1000s - 1146 A.R)

Main article: [Witcher schools](#)

The second generation of Witcher Schools emerged during the Silver Age following the establishment of the first schools. Their rapid growth and widespread presence led to the near depletion of monster populations, ushering

in the Bronze Age of Witchers.

The Bronze Age of Witchers (1146 - 1358 A.R)

Main article: [Witcher schools](#)

This era was marked by a decline in both monster threats and witcher activity as monsters grew increasingly rare and, due to propaganda from the churches of the North and the distrust of the rulers, witchers became the monsters in most of the population's eyes. The different schools each came under attack from various people or suffered from tragic events such as the [School of the Manticore](#), and by the time the last school fell, the number of witchers had diminished greatly. This era also witnessed the "Witcher Migrations," a period of expansion where witchers ventured beyond their traditional territories to establish a presence across the continent from the Northern Kingdoms to the distant [Tuyotuki Islands](#).

The Platinum Age of Witchers (1358 - Onwards)

Main articles: [Witcher schools](#), [School of the Grylfalcon](#), [School of the Crane](#)

Following the decline and extinction of several schools in the "Bronze Age," the need for witchers arose anew due to a rise in monster populations and the Second Conjunction of Spheres (1358). This era saw the re-emergence of the witcher profession.

Slaying

Killing a witcher is exceedingly difficult due to their enhanced abilities and resilience. However, there are instances where non-humans and humans, particularly in groups, have successfully slain witchers. Occasionally, in solitary cases, veteran mercenaries have also been capable of such feats. For example, the infamous Leo Bonhart reportedly killed at least three witchers from the Schools of the [Cat](#), Wolf, and [Griffin](#).

Despite these challenges, the most effective way to kill a witcher is by employing a veteran mage. Mages possess powerful magical abilities that can overcome the defenses and regenerative capabilities of witchers, making them the most formidable adversaries in this regard.

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